

Description

SIDE BET FOR BLACKJACK STYLE CARD GAME

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

[0001] This invention relates to a method of playing a card game based on the well-known game of blackjack.

SUMMARY OF INVENTION

[0002] In one aspect, the invention may comprise a method of playing blackjack or 21, comprising the steps of:

[0003] (a) dealing two initial cards to a player and a single initial card to a dealer (the "three initial cards");

[0004] (b) allowing the player to place a side bet;

[0005] (c) paying or collecting the side bet in accordance with a pre-established set of rules which cover all possible combinations of the three initial cards; and

[0006] (d) continuing with the blackjack game.

[0007] In another aspect, the invention comprises an improvement to a conventional or variant game of blackjack,

wherein the improvement comprises the steps of:

[0008] (a)allowing the player to place a side bet;

[0009] (b)paying or collecting the side bet in accordance with a pre-established set of rules which cover all possible combinations of the three initial cards.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0010] When describing the present invention, all terms not defined herein have their common art-recognized meanings. The term "live casino game" is intended to encompass a game in which the house acts as the banker, the house collecting all losing wagers and paying all winning wagers. The term "wager" is used synonymously with the term "bet". The dealer is employed by the house and each player plays exclusively against the house.

[0011] The method of the present invention is an optional side bet which may be provided in conjunction with conventional blackjack, or any variation of blackjack. The side bet is based on combinations of three cards, which in one embodiment, are the first two cards dealt to a player and the dealer's first card. References to "the three cards" or "the three initial cards" herein shall be understood to refer to these cards.

[0012] The present invention is intended to be practiced as a live casino game in a casino or gaming house environment where players may wager against the house, but may not be restricted to such an environment. The basic object of blackjack is to achieve a hand of cards close to or equal to 21 without exceeding 21. If a hand exceeds 21, the player or dealer is said to have "bust". The card game method of the present invention may be played with a standard deck of 52 cards, and is preferably played with at least three decks, and is more preferably played with six decks of cards. As is conventionally the case, numerical cards are valued at their face value, face cards count as 10 and aces count as 1 or 11 points.

[0013] The dealer plays against each player one at a time. If there are two or more players, they must take turns playing. Play begins with each player making a main bet and, optionally, a side bet. The amount of the main bet and the side bet may be any sum allowed by the house. The main bet is won, lost or pushed in accordance with the basic rules of blackjack described above, or the variant rules if the game is a variation of blackjack.

[0014] The dealer deals an initial two cards face up to each player and an initial card face up for the dealer. These three

cards are used to determine the fate of the side bet. The side bet will be determined and paid or collected before regular blackjack play continues.

[0015] The side bet is an optional betting method which introduces elements of other three-card games. For example, the house may recognize winning hands and provide payouts based on the three cards being sequential or the same, either suited or not-suited. As is obvious, three same cards of the same suit is only possible in multiple deck games. As well, the house may recognize cases where the initial three card hand equals 19, 20 or 21. Therefore, the side bet is won or lost in accordance with a set of rules which are pre-established by the house. The types of winning hands and payouts provided determine the house edge in the side bet. Those skilled in the art may easily modify the types of winning hands and payouts to increase or decrease the house edge as necessary or desired.

[0016] In a particularly preferred embodiment, the winning hands and payouts shown in Table 1 provide a 2.6% – 2.8% house edge using multiple decks of cards.

TABLE 1

Player's Hand	Payoff
Suited 7-7-7	200 – 1
Suited 6-7-8	100 – 1
Any Suit 7-7-7	50 – 1
Any Suit 6-7-8	30 – 1
Suited 21	15 – 1
21	3 – 1
20	2 – 1
19	2 – 1
All Others	Loss

[0017] In the event the player qualifies for more than one winning three-card hand, only the highest payout will be paid. For example, if the three initial cards are a suited 7-7-7, then the player will win the 200 to 1 bet, but not the "any suit 7-7-7" payout nor the "suited 21" payout.

[0018] In another preferred embodiment, the winning hands and payouts shown in Table 2 provide a 4.83% house edge using multiple decks of cards.

TABLE 2

Player's Hand	Payoff
Suited 7-7-7	500 – 1
Suited 6-7-8	150 – 1
Any Suit 7-7-7	100 – 1
Any Suit 6-7-8	30 – 1
Suited 21	20 – 1
21	2 – 1
20	2 – 1
19	2 – 1
All Others	Loss

[0019] As is apparent to one skilled in the art, the methods disclosed herein may be implemented at a live table game or electronically in an electronic video type gaming device, of the same general type disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,948,134; 5,022,653; 5,377,973; 5,374,067; and 5,382,025. In the electronic version, the hand(s) of the player(s) and dealer take the form of video representations of playing cards displayed on a screen, under the control of a microprocessor operating under a suitable program.

[0020] As will be apparent to those skilled in the art, various modifications, adaptations and variations of the foregoing specific disclosure can be made without departing from the scope of the invention claimed herein.